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FOR AF/E - MBEYZEROV

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/11/2019  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [MA](#)  
SUBJECT: MADAGASCAR: REVISED GUIDANCE FOR ENGAGING WITH THE  
DE FACTO REGIME

REF: STATE 29425

Classified By: POL/ECON CHIEF DOVIE HOLLAND FOR REASONS 1.4 B AND D.

¶1. (C) Post requests a slight revision of standing guidance from the Department on engaging with the de facto transition regime in Madagascar (reftel). Specifically, we suggest revising that guidance to allow occasional, discreet contacts with high transition authority (HAT) or government members at the COM's discretion, while still avoiding all actions that could be construed, or potentially manipulated, as recognition or quasi-recognition. To effectively encourage the de facto leaders to resume negotiations and reach a consensual resolution of the political crisis, as well as to understand the shifting situation, the Ambassador requires this limited access to selected transition authorities.

¶3. (C) COMMENT: All other provisions of standing guidance continue to be suitable and appropriate in the present environment. Post does not now intend to make or recommend any other change in the USG posture and approach towards the illegal transition authorities. The requested revision of the engagement guidelines would merely allow the Ambassador to pursue occasional, useful conversations with a small number of contacts in Rajoelina's inner circle, with an aim toward influencing their thinking and behavior. We note that under the present guidance, that contact is not permitted.  
MARQUARDT